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SUBJECT Status of the Medical Practice in the USSR

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1. Q. Compare the status, privileges, emoluments, etc., of people in military medicine and civil medicine.
 - A. Military doctors are usually members of the Communist Party. They do, therefore, receive better pay, free food and quarters and other privileges that non-military doctors do not receive. Civilian doctors receive 300 rubles per month for the first five years after they graduate. This is raised to 350 rubles after five years of service and 400 rubles after ten years. It is difficult for a civilian doctor with a family to live on the pay and in order to make more money doctors will work at two places. For example, one would work from 8:00 AM to 4:00 PM at a hospital and then work at a dispensary from 4:00 PM to 11:00 PM. As a rule civilian doctors are not allowed to have a private practice. There are exceptions to this, as in the case of Party members and well-known elderly medical professors.
2. Q. Give the professional status, if any, of people engaged in dentistry -- comparative social standing, salary, political reliability, preferential treatment, etc., with medical profession.
 - A. In general the working conditions of the Russian dentist are similar to those of medical doctors. However, dentists receive less pay. Then too, they are not required to spend as much time learning their profession, the dentistry course being four years as compared to five for the medical course. Doctors are treated with a little more professional respect than are dentists.
3. Q. Is there any special political indoctrination of members of the medical profession besides regular Communist Party history courses?
 - A. All college and university students receive the same political education. The medical profession receives no special indoctrination.

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4. Q. What is the actual workload of the average medical doctor?
- A. In city hospitals and dispensaries a doctor works 48 hours a week. In addition, four or five times a month he takes the 24 hour hospital duty. A doctor must also conduct sanitary inspections of grocery stores, restaurants, etc., in an area assigned to him.
5. Q. Why do people become doctors? What are the rewards, and what kind of people become doctors?
- A. People become doctors because of professional interest. The rewards are relatively good pay compared to the majority of people. People in respected social positions become doctors.
6. Q. Are any classes of persons excluded from the medical profession (sons of Kulaks, relatives of political prisoners, any persons considered at all unreliable because of family background, status, class, etc.)?
- A. There is a general class discrimination common to all Soviet colleges. For example, the student applicant must be politically reliable. There are preferences and privileges given to the workers and peasants. Then, too, there are higher standards of requirements for the "intelligentsia".
7. Q. What would be the best appeal to make to obtain the cooperation of doctors in resistance efforts? What would be best calculated to appeal to the doctor to assist in simple passive resistance?
- A. The best method would be to appeal to the professional ethics of Soviet doctors, pointing out that the medical profession should be above politics. An appeal to the humane sentiments of doctors, pointing out that the Soviet regime is responsible for low living standards, inadequate medical care and facilities, and the general sufferings of the people would be the best appeal to the doctor to assist in simple passive resistance.
8. Q. What are the doctors' complaints against the present system?
- A. The doctors' complaints against the present system are as follows: Every doctor must serve from three to five years after finishing medical school wherever the Ministry of Health sends him. At times even married couples, both doctors, are sent to different parts of the USSR. Doctors also object to the fact that private practice is prohibited. A third complaint voiced by the doctors is that they are always under surveillance by the political officials and suffer much interference from them.
9. Q. Does the doctor resent limitations in the supply of facilities to patients, or does he become philosophic?
- A. They are careful not to show their feelings and the majority of doctors do not accept the situation philosophically.
10. Q. Does the average doctor want to improve his services?
- A. Doctors are encouraged to improve their proficiency by taking correspondence courses, reading medical journals and periodicals and by attending medical conferences and meetings.
11. Q. What knowledge do you have of doctors in Satellite countries such as Poland, Bulgaria, Rumania, etc.? What is the relation between doctors in the Satellite countries and the Soviet Union? Do they look up to Soviet Union medicine, or, on the contrary, do they look down on it?
- A. I do not know, never having met any.
12. Q. Do the doctors in the Satellite countries tend to be politically reliable?
- A. I do not know.

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